

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims pending:

- At time of the Action: 29-65
- After this Response: 29-65

5 **Canceled or Withdrawn claims:** 1-28 (previously cancelled)

Amended claims: 40, 42, and 59

New claims: none

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings:

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1. - 28. canceled.

29. (previously presented) A computer-implemented method comprising:

15 configuring a distributed processing system of a plurality of distributed devices coupled to a network, wherein the distributed devices include respective client agents configured to process respective portions of a workload for the distributed processing system,

20 wherein the client agents for particular said distributed devices have corresponding software-based network attached storage (NAS) components configured to assess unused or under-utilized storage resources in selected distributed devices of the plurality of distributed devices;

25 representing with the software-based NAS component that the selected distributed devices respectively comprise NAS devices having an available amount of storage resources related to the unused and under-utilized storage resources for the selected distributed devices; and

processing one or more of data storage or access workloads for the distributed processing system by accessing data from or storing data to at least a

portion of the available amount of storage resources to provide NAS service to a client device coupled to the network.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising enabling at
5 least one of the selected distributed devices to function as a stand-alone dedicated NAS device through use of the client agent for the particular said distributed device.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising enabling at
10 least one of the selected distributed devices to function as a location distributed device to store location information associated with data stored by the selected distributed devices through use of the client agent for the particular said distributed device.

32. (previously presented) The method of claim 31, further comprising receiving
15 an access request from the client device and directing the client device to data requested on at least one of the selected distributed devices.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 32, further comprising managing
20 the NAS service for said distributed devices at least in part utilizing a centralized server.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, further comprising
25 downloading the software-based NAS component to the selected distributed devices.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 33, further comprising storing, with the centralized server, location information associated with the data stored in the selected distributed devices.

5 36. (previously presented) The method of claim 35, further comprising utilizing the centralized server to receive and route the data for storage to the selected distributed devices based upon individual capabilities of the selected distributed devices indicated in a capabilities database.

10 37. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the method is at least partially performed through use of the Internet.

38. (previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising managing storage resources for the selected distributed devices with a storage priority
15 control that facilitates use of the available amount of storage resources for the selected distributed devices.

39. (previously presented) The method of claim 38, further comprising accepting selection of the storage priority control, by the client device, that comprises a
20 parameter.

40. (currently amended) The method of claim [[39,]] 38, further comprising prioritizing one or more of storage or deletion of data using the storage priority control that comprises storage priority level schemes.

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41. (previously presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the managing storage resources further comprises marking directly data or files.

42. (currently amended) A system comprising:

5 a plurality of distributed devices configured to be coupled to a network, wherein the distributed devices include respective client agents configured to process respective portions of workloads for the distributed processing system, the client agents including respective instances of[[:]] a software-based network attached storage (NAS) component, wherein the NAS component is configured to:

10 assess unused storage resources of said distributed devices;
 allocate respective available amount of unused storage resources in selected distributed devices of the plurality of distributed devices;
 represent that the selected distributed devices comprise respective NAS devices having the respective available amounts of storage resources;
15 and
 process workloads associated with data storage and access by accessing data from and storing data into portions of the storage resources in the selected distributed devices to provide NAS service to a client device.

20 43. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, wherein at least one of the client agent is configured to enable at least one of the selected distributed devices to function as a stand-alone dedicated NAS device.

44. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, wherein the client agent is
25 configured to enable at least one of the selected distributed devices to function as a

location distributed device to store location information for data stored by the selected distributed devices.

45. (previously presented) The system of claim 44, wherein the location
5 distributed device is configured to receive an access request from the client device
and direct the client device to the data stored on the selected distributed devices that
was requested.

46. (previously presented) The system of claim 45, wherein the system is further
10 configured to manage the NAS service for said distributed devices at least in part
utilizing a centralized server system.

47. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein the centralized server
system is further configured to enable download of the NAS component to the
15 selected distributed devices.

48. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein the centralized server
system is configured to store location information associated with the data stored
in the selected distributed devices.

20 49. (previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the centralized server
system is configured to receive data storage and access requests from the client
device and route a data storage workload to the selected distributed devices based
upon individual capabilities of the selected distributed devices indicated in a
25 capabilities database.

50. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, wherein the distributed devices are configured to be coupled to the Internet.

51. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, further comprising a storage
5 priority control configured to facilitate use of the available amount of storage resources for the selected distributed devices.

52. (previously presented) The system of claim 51, wherein the storage priority control comprises a parameter selectable by the client device.

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53. (previously presented) The system of claim 52, wherein the storage priority control comprises storage priority level schemes that prioritize one or more of storage or deletion of data.

15 54. (previously presented) The system of claim 52, wherein the storage priority control comprises a priority marking directly given to data or files.

55. (previously presented) A computer-implemented method comprising:

allocating data for storage among selected devices of a plurality of devices
20 that are independent and available on a network, wherein the devices have respective software agents that are usable to control respective local storage resources that are unused or underused on the devices; and

representing, using at least one of said software agents, that the selected devices comprise a network attached storage (NAS) device with storage capacity
25 equal to a total of the unused or underused storage resource.

56. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 55,
wherein the allocating is performed by a server.

57. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 55,
5 wherein the allocating and representing are performed by one of the plurality of
devices.

58. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 55,
wherein the allocating is performed in accordance with respective capability
10 vectors calculated for the selected devices.

59. (currently amended) The computer-implemented method of claim 55,
further comprising:

identifying whether the storage resources for a particular device[[,]] of the
15 selected devices[[,]] are idle, and

performing the allocating so a greater portion of the data for storage is sent
to the particular device if the storage resources for the particular device are idle,
wherein the greater portion is greater than a portion of the data that would be
allocated to the particular device if the storage resources for the particular device
20 were not idle.

60. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 55,
wherein the allocating and representing are performed by at least one of the
plurality of devices via interaction with other devices on a peer-to-peer basis.

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61. (previously presented) A computer-implemented method comprising:

downloading to at least one selected device, included in a plurality of devices, a network attached storage (NAS) component and a portion of a storage workload for storage in memory that is unused or under-utilized; and

5 representing to a client device, coupled to the multiplicity of devices by a network, that at least one selected device is a dedicated NAS device.

62. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 61, further comprising storing location information in a database that is usable to

10 indicate locations in memory where the portion of the storage workload is stored.

63. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 61, wherein the computer-implemented method is performed by at least one central server coupled to the network.

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64. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 61, wherein the computer-implemented method is performed by a particular device of the multiplicity of devices.

20 65. (previously presented) The computer-implemented method of claim 61, wherein the computer-implemented method is at least partially performed through use of the Internet.